**Immigration Oral History Project**

**Introduction:** While reading *The Joy Luck Club*, we’ve followed the stories of four Chinese-American immigrant families living in San Francisco. The United States is filled with similar stories of immigrants making a place for themselves in American society, while still retaining their unique cultural identity. It’s your turn to go out and find these stories.

**Assignment:** You will be conducting oral history interviews with first or second-generation immigrants. I will assign each of you an interviewee whom you will meet with outside of class and interview about his or her life as an immigrant in the United States. The interview will be recorded by either video or audio. You will need to transcribe this interview into text that you will submit along with your recorded interview at the end of the project.

**How to Complete Your Oral History**

* Introduce yourself to your interviewee and get to know them. The more comfortable you feel with each other, the better your oral history will be.
* Set up an interview time and locations. You will need at least an hour or so to interview.
* Research the interviewee’s country of origin. You will have time in class to do this.
* Create questions to guide your interview. I have provided a list of example questions, but please come up with some of your own. You do not have to ask all of these questions, they are simply examples to help guide your interview.
* Record your interview.
* Transcribe the interview. Please note that this is a time-consuming process, so give yourself enough time to do this accurately.

**Example Interview Questions**

* What country are you originally from?
* Why did you leave that country?
* How old were you when you left the country?
* Why did you choose to come to the United States?
* What was your first impression of the United States? Has this changed?
* What lifestyle changes did you make when you came here?
* What are some similarities/differences between the culture of your home country and the culture of the United States?
* What hopes did you have for yourself and/or your family coming to the United States? Were these hopes realized?
* How were you treated when you first came to the United States? How are you treated now?
* Were your expectations of America met?